

ONLINE JOB SEARCH

Online Job Search is a two hour course that will provide students with strategies to conduct an effective online job search. Students will learn how to access job sites on the web, use job search engines, and fill out online applications. The course also includes a self-evaluation of skills and tips on how to guard the jobseeker's privacy during the job search.

Objectives:

- Identify the steps for an effective job search
- Complete, discuss, and analyze the results of personality, career interest assessments
- Research current and emerging fields related to personal interest areas
- Determine the impact of technology on careers of personal interest
- Identify skills that can be transferable among a variety of careers
- Evaluate the impact of positive and negative personal choices, including use of electronic communications such as social networking sites
- Complete sample job applications
- Evaluate career interests and abilities
- Evaluate job search engine strategies

Introduction

Finding a new job can be a challenge for just about everyone. There's a lot more to it than looking in the classified section of the newspaper, hoping to find your dream job. Today, the internet plays a major role in the job search, from developing a network of professional contacts to submitting job applications via email. What's more, the majority of entry-level positions in the United States are now **only** posted online!

Knowing how to use the internet effectively is now a required skill for all jobseekers. Our hope is that this guide will teach you the skills to become a successful job hunter in the 21st century.

What are the reasons for a job search?

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How did you (or someone you know) get a job in the past?

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How has the internet changed the job hunt process?

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What does a modern job hunter need?

1. Internet access: Having reliable access to a computer and the internet is crucial since so much of the job search is now conducted online. You will need access to the internet to do research about companies, keep in touch with your network by email, find openings on job boards, and submit online job applications. If you don't have a computer or internet at home, your local library may be able to help.

2. Professional E-mail address: Email is a fast and effective way to build your online network and communicate with potential employers. Before you start making online connections, make sure that you have a "professional" email address. Don't use a goofy nickname as your email address! That could give a potential employer a negative impression of you. Imagine that you are an employer and you receive two job applications from the following email addresses:

Steve.Gobs@gmail.com

fUnkyyyb0Y68@hotmail.com

Circle the email address that appears more professional to you!

If you are looking for a new job while presently employed, do not use the email address from your current job. You could get into trouble for using company resources to look for a new job. The best way is to create a free personal email account with an email provider such as **Gmail** or **Yahoo**.

Finally, make sure you always employ proper **email etiquette** when searching for a job. Always include an explanatory subject line, choose a plain styled font like Times New Roman, and keep your messages brief and direct. See the **Email** section in this handbook for more hints.

For more information on email, please see the **Email** chapter in this manual.

3. **Resume:** A resume is like an advertisement for your job skills. Spend a considerable amount of time working on creating a strong resume that highlights your skills and qualifications. Also, think of your resume as a living document: every time you submit your resume, you should tweak it to match the position you want. For a detailed guide on how to make an effective resume, please see the **Resume Writing** chapter in this manual.
4. **Organizational System:** It is very important to stay organized during the job search. To do that, you will need a **calendar**, a **job search journal**, and a **contact list**. Every time you complete a job-search task such as submitting an application or contacting a potential employer, record the details in your job search journal. Many of these organizational tools are incorporated into email programs, making them very convenient to use during the online job search.
5. **Time:** A job hunt takes a lot of time: researching companies, preparing cover letters and resumes, and developing your professional network. Try to make the best use of your time and set a daily routine of job hunting tasks. Treat the job search like it was your job—even though you aren't getting paid for it.
6. **Positive attitude** Remember that finding a job is not something that happens overnight. It may take several months before the right opportunity comes along, and for many, this process can be difficult and draining. However, it is very important to maintain a positive attitude throughout the entire job search process. Here are a few ways to help you stay uplifted during the job search:

- Set realistic small goals, such as taking a class to gain a new skill. Remember to record meeting these small goals in your job search journal. Seeing the progress you are making will validate the time effort you put into the job search.
- Try to turn any setbacks into learning opportunities that will make you a stronger job-seeker. Remind yourself that there are always jobs available.
- Having the support of family and friends during the job search can help you from getting discouraged and losing focus of your goals.

Networking

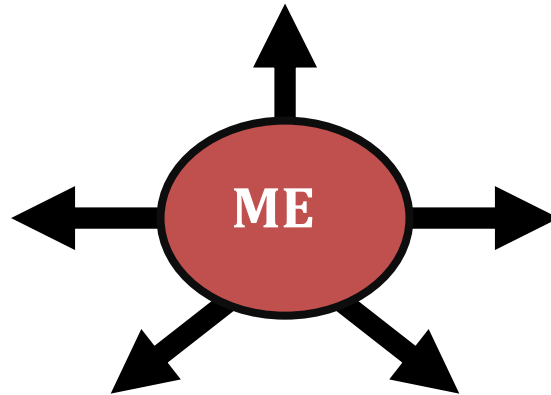
Your network (who you know and who they know) is the key to finding a new job. According to US Bureau of Labor Statistics, **around 70% of all jobs are found through networking**. This means that most jobs are not advertised in the newspaper or on online job boards. Rather, there is a “hidden job market” where openings are filled through word of mouth and professional recommendations.

So what exactly is **networking**?

Networking means **making connections with other people**. It’s not unreasonable to say that everyone already has a network—even if they don’t realize it yet. Your network includes:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Family | • Former teachers and classmates |
| • Friends | • Current and former co-workers |
| • Recreational groups | • Church and social organizations |

Take a moment and write down at least five people in your personal network:



How can your network help you with your career goals?

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Think about how to approach people in your network for help. Be prepared and have a goal in mind, but don't directly ask for a job. Be creative and reconnect with someone you haven't talked to in a long time. Consider HOW you contact someone in your network:

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How can you increase the size of your network?

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PUTTING THE “NET” IN NETWORKING

Today the internet can help you expand your network all over the world. You can use the internet to make new contacts and maintain existing ones, communicate rapidly via email, and market your skills and qualifications. Here are just a few ways that the internet can be used for networking:

- **Social media:** Sites like **Facebook** and **LinkedIn** are the perfect places to start building your online network. You can connect with countless people who have similar career interests with just a few clicks. **But be careful what you put online!** Employers now check sites like Facebook when they are investigating job applicants—so don’t ever post anything embarrassing on your profile (even if you aren’t using it to find a new job).
- **Personal blog/website:** A career-minded personal website can be used as a virtual resume and business card. It’s a great way to showcase your talents, especially if you want to work in a creative field like design or writing.
- **Email:** Email is a useful networking tool that makes keeping in touch with people from all around the world easy. Periodically keep in touch with people in your contact list to maintain and develop your relationship. Again, remember to use proper netiquette!

Finally know that whenever you tap into your network, your friends and acquaintances are kindly offering their time and energy to help you. Always show your gratitude, and remember to return the favor when they seek you out for advice!

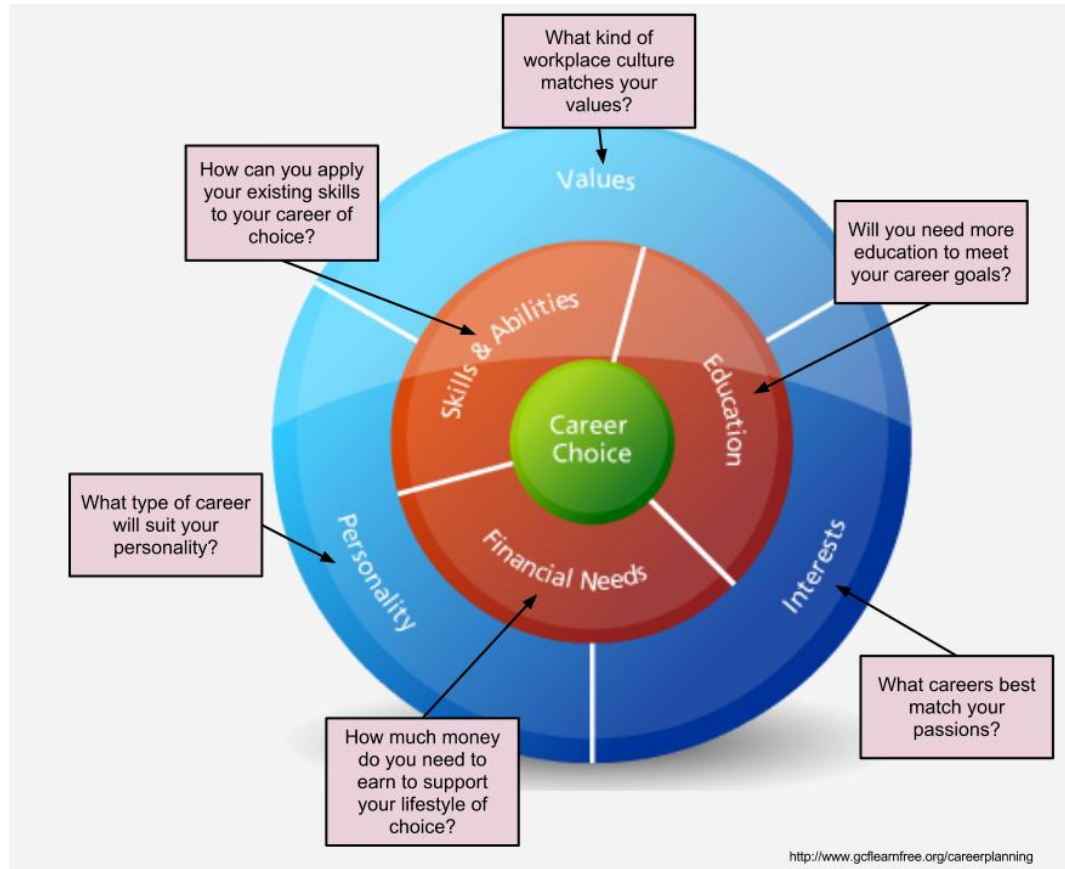
Job Search Steps

What are the steps for an effective job search?

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1. **SELF ASSESSMENT** Career Self Assessment Activity

Before you find the job of your dreams, you have to know exactly what you want from that job. The first step to an effective job search is completing a complete assessment of your interests, beliefs, abilities, experience, and needs.



2. RESEARCH:

After completing an assessment of your needs and interests, you are ready to start looking at possible careers. The next step is to learn more about the field you want to join. Learning as much as possible about an industry will make you a stronger applicant when you are ready to apply. Here is a list of questions that you should ask when researching a career:

What is the state of the industry?.....

.....

What kinds of positions are available?.....

What are the working conditions/culture like.....

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What are the educational requirements?

What is the typical salary?

There are a lot of resources available to help you answer these questions. The internet is a great place start.

- **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>): Published by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, this site profiles hundreds of occupations and provides information about required qualifications, salary averages, work environment, and the growth rate.
- Other good **career profile sites**:
<http://salary.com> <http://occupations.careers.org/>
- Another good place to look for information is directly on a **company's website**. There you can find information about the company's history, products, values, and much more. And many companies list job openings directly on their websites.
- You can participate in specialized **online forums** to build up network contacts and get insider information from people who already work in a certain field.
- Many of the big online job boards (monster.com, indeed.com, and so on) have career profile sections, as well as well as other job searching resources.

Of course, once again nothing beats interacting with a real live person! Visiting a company, interviewing a current employee, or volunteering can give you a great sense of a job's responsibilities, expectations and environment.

3. CAREER OBJECTIVE

After the research phase you hopefully have a good understanding of where in the job market you might do well. Now you can start developing a **career objective**.

Examples of career objectives:

- *"I want a career as a health care technician in a small hospital"*
- *"Since I am artistic and like working with computers, I want to design web sites for a local media company"*
- *"Because I want to work with children, I want to change careers and become an elementary school teacher"*
- *"I love cooking and working in fast paced environments, so I want to own my own restaurant"*

After you create your career objective, you can begin to develop a plan to reach it. Use these questions as a guideline to develop small, realistic goals that will be like stepping stones to your career objective:

- Skills: What skills does the job require? What skills do I have? What do I have to do to get those skills?
- Sacrifices: Do I need to invest money in education? Will I have to take night or weekend classes? Am I willing to relocate?
- Network: Who do I need to talk to/meet Do I know someone who can help me?
- Physical stuff: targeted resumes, portfolio, calendar, business card, cover letter, references

4. FIND JOB OPENINGS

Finding job openings requires creative thinking. If you only rely on one approach, you will likely find yourself with limited opportunities. However, using too many approaches will stretch you too thin, keeping you from developing quality targeted applications. Take a look at the following methods and pick three to four that best suit your career objective and strengths.

Network

Remember the percentage of jobs created through networking? 70%! Employers want to be sure that the employees they hire are outstanding and can add value to their companies. And personal recommendations from trusted sources are still the best way to find those great employees. That means networking is an essential activity for all job seekers. Take every opportunity you can to cultivate your network—even after you start your new job.

Online Job Boards

Online job boards seem to advertise unlimited jobs, and thousands of new openings are added every day. Most feature powerful searching tools, letting you narrow down your job search to very specific criteria, such as location, job title, and salary. You can also post your resume directly to the job board for employers to peruse.

However, relying on these big online job boards can limit your opportunities. While it would be nice to simply type in your dream career and immediately get a job offer with a few clicks, the reality is that these big boards are typically swamped by thousands of applicants all competing for the same jobs.

Additionally, it is much more difficult to make personal contact with a company this way. Despite this, online job boards are still valuable resources for career information and can give you the sense of what kind of jobs are currently in demand. Here a few of the major online job boards:

monster.com

indeed.com

careerbuilder.com

Specialized Online Job Boards

An alternative approach is using job boards dedicated to a certain industry or geographic location. There are job boards that specialize in government jobs, jobs for recent college graduates, non-profit jobs, and much more.

idealist.org - specializes in non-profit jobs and volunteer opportunities

workintexas.com - advertises job opportunities in Texas

craigslist.org - features jobs from local employers, but beware of scams

experienceworks.org – helps Texan seniors find jobs

Sign up for e-mail job alerts

Many job boards allow you to sign up for job notices sent directly to your email. This is a good way to find out and apply to openings as soon as they become available.

Directly apply to a company

When you find a company that matches your career objectives, see if any job listings are listed on their website. Additionally, you could look for contact information on a company's website and call or send an email to ask about any employment opportunities. It never hurts to ask!

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5. FOLLOW-UP

After you submit an application, you aren't finished yet! You need to follow up by calling a representative of the company. Finally, keep an organization log. Write down the name of the company and other contact info and date applied

*Career Self Assessment***PART 1: INTRINSIC ASSESSMENT** - Rate each from 1-5 according to its importance to you:

Values	Rate Importance
High salary	
Helping people/society	
Prestigious job title	
Competing with others	
Leadership/management role	
Creative expression	
Prefer challenging work	
Control of schedule?	
Winning/Success	
Recognition from others	

Interests	Rate Importance
Spending time outdoors	
Using your hands and tools to build things	
Taking care of plants or animals	
Participating in athletic activities	
Working with numbers	
Playing musical instruments	
Learning new things	
Creative hobbies like painting or writing	
Teaching people new skills?	
Solving problems?	

Personality	
Working independently	
Working in groups	
Interacting with the public	
Performing repetitive tasks	
Work under pressure	
Well-organized	
Managing other people	
Coping with negative outcomes	
Flexibility	
Following established procedures	

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PART TWO: EXTRINSIC ASSESSMENT – *Rate your technical and interpersonal skills. Then list your experience and financial needs.*

Technical Skills	Strong	Some	Limited
Computer/Software			
Other Languages			
Machines			
Drawing/Painting			
Writing			
Public Speaking			
Personal care			
Repair and Maintenance			
Installation			
Operation			
Troubleshooting			
Other			

Interpersonal Skills	Strong	Some	Limited
Detail Oriented			
Coordination/Make decisions			
Logic/Critical Thinking			
Teaching/Instruction/Advising			
Negotiation/Persuasion			
Time management			
Work without supervision			
Improve procedures			
Find opportunities to help			
Solve problems/Resolve			
Customer service skills			
Work as a team			
Communicate information			
Identify problems			
Empathize/Sensitive to			
Respect others			
Listen to others			

Experience

Education	Work Experience	Volunteer/Other

Financial Needs

EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Housing	
Utilities	
Food	
Entertainment	
Transportation	
Clothing/Hair Cuts/Self-Care	
Medical	
Savings	
Other	
TOTAL	

Career Profile Activity

The Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>) is a valuable tool that allows you to easily find information about thousands of careers.

DIRECTIONS: The instructor will assign you a job to search for on the OOH site. After you read about the job, fill out **Career Profile #1** form below by clicking on each box and typing in the correct information. After you finish, please search for another job of your choice and fill out **Career Profile #2**

Career Profile # 1

Career Name:.....

Average Salary:

Job Duties:

Educational Requirements:

Work Environment:.....

Projected Growth:

Similar Occupations:

Career Profile # 2

Career Name:.....

Average Salary:

Job Duties:

Educational Requirements:

Work Environment:.....

Projected Growth:

Similar Occupations:

Career Objective Activity

Use this outline to help you determine the steps needed to achieve your career goals.

Career Objective:

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Potential Connections and Networking Opportunities:

Do I know anyone in this field? Where can I go to volunteer or meet people in this field?

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Create goals that are S.M.A.R.T. (*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely*) and outline below.

Goal 1:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Goal 2:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

What strategies will I use to stay motivated and on-task?

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(Above activity adapted from: <http://www.gcfllearnfree.org/careerplanning/3.3>)

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Job Search Journal

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